



AAC Publications

Mukot (Mukut) Himal, Historical First Ascent from the West

Nepal, Mukut Himal

Camp 1 on Mukot Himal in 1967. Behind lies the northwest face of Peak 5,975m. To the right, in the background, is Sita Chuchura (6,611m). Photo by F. Charles Dufour

Officially opened in 2014, Mukot Himal (as spelled on the HMG-Finn map, but a.k.a. Mukut Himal, 6,087m) lies north of Dhaulagiri on the ridge running south from Hongde (6,556m) to Sita Chuchara (6,611m). The “Mukut Himal” region is north of Dhaulagiri II, and the highest summit is Hongde.

This area was reconnoitered in 1954 by Jimmy Roberts (U.K.), who appears to have climbed two small peaks to the north and west of Hongde from a base in the village of Mukut. Reports in the AAJ in 2015 and 2016 describe the first official ascent of Mukot Himal but hint that the mountain was likely first climbed in the 1960s. In fact, it was, and we can now provide details.

In the autumn of 1967, Johannes Noordijk led a seven-member team from the Netherlands, which left Pokhara on October 4 and arrived in Mukut village on November 9 after a long trek via the Barbung Khola to the west. The same day they established Camp 1 (estimated to be at 4,880m) in the valley west-southwest of Mukot Himal (the valley north of Peak 5,975m). On the 10th, they placed Camp 2 on the ridge between a spot at 5,655m and the col marking the start of Mukot Himal’s west ridge (their altitude estimate for this camp was 5,425m).

On the 1967 approach to Camp 1 on Mukot Himal, with the huge northeast face of Dhaulagiri II (7,751m) behind. The smaller summit in front of this is Peak 5,985m. Photo by F. Charles Dufour

On the following day, Fons Driessen, Michael von Mourik Broekman, Phu Dorje Sherpa, and Tenzing Gyatso Sherpa climbed up the west ridge of Mukot Himal, then slanted up the north-northwest face to reach the last section of the north ridge, which they followed to the summit. Snow conditions were excellent and the sky clear, although the wind became increasingly strong and cold. This was a very different route to that followed by the 2015 teams, which approached via the next valley to the north and reached the north ridge at a lower elevation.

On the same day, November 11, other members of the team attempted Peak 5,975m, probably from the valley to the south of Mukot Himal, stopping on the summit ridge around 60m below the top. This peak lies southwest of Mukot Himal, has an impressive northwest face, and may still be unclimbed.

In 2015, three teams organized by the U.K. commercial operator Karakoram Experience made staggered attempts on the mountain. The first, led by Adrian Sommers, reached the summit from a base camp at around 5,000m on October 17. The second, led by Tom Richardson, reached a point fractionally below the summit on the 23rd, while the third, which arrived at base camp on the 26th, was immediately caught in a storm that deposited a meter of snow. They did no climbing.

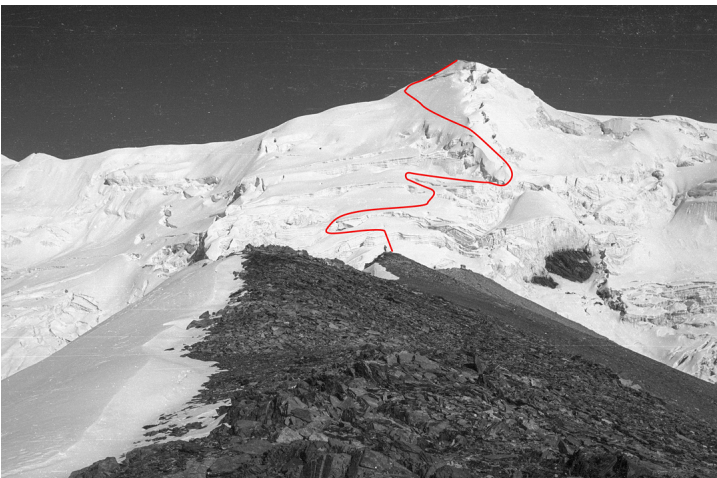
In 2016, a team from the RAF Mountaineering Association (U.K.), led by Ian Richardson, reached the north ridge from the east via an approach up the Hidden Valley. In late April, from a high camp at 5,400m, Rhys Jenkins, Richardson, and David Spooner reached the summit, benefiting on the upper north ridge from fixed ropes left in place by the Karakoram Experience expedition the previous autumn. They found the summit ridge to be hard blue ice and around 40°.

– **Lindsay Griffin**, with information from Rodolphe Popier, Himalayan Database, France, and Florentin Charles Dufour, The Netherlands

Images



Camp 1 on Mukot Himal in 1967. Behind lies the northwest face of Peak 5,975m. To the right, in the background, is Sita Chuchura (6,611m).



Mukot Himal from the west, with the 1967 route of ascent marked.



On the 1967 approach to Camp 1 on Mukot Himal, with the huge northeast face of Dhaulagiri II

(7,751m) behind. The smaller summit in front of this is Peak 5,985m.

Article Details

Author	Lindsay Griffin
Publication	AAJ
Volume	63
Issue	95
Page	
Copyright Date	2021
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions